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OTHER MATTERS

Draft text submitted by the Vice-Chairman, Mr. Miloslav Hettes (Slovakia)

Information provided by governments and the exchange of national experiences

1. The Commission on Sustainable Development

Recognizes the efforts made by all countries that have provided voluntary national communications or reports on the implementation of Agenda 21 at the national level and that have been made available by the Secretariat through the website;

Notes that voluntary national reporting has increased and that up to now 106 countries have provided information to the Commission;

Expresses its appreciation for the efforts made by the Secretariat in compiling and updating the information so provided. In this respect, the Commission emphasizes the importance of processing the contents of the national reports in order to take full advantage of the information therein;

Takes note of the concern expressed in the document E/CN.17/1998/8 regarding the timeliness with which these reports are requested and submitted;

Takes note of and welcomes the presentations of national experiences on sustainable water management given during the sixth session of the Commission and its ad hoc intersessional working group by representatives of China, the Netherlands, the Russian Federation, Venezuela and Zimbabwe;

Recalls the recommendation made on the exchange of national experiences at the regional level as contained in paragraphs 133 (b) and (c) of the Programme

for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 (General Assembly resolution S-19/2, annex), and expresses its appreciation for the work carried out by the Secretariat in this field.

2. The Commission

Encourages Governments to continue providing voluntary national communications or reports on the implementation of Agenda 21 at the national level with broad involvement of all sectors of society and invites those governments which have not yet done so to submit their national reports;

Also encourages Governments to continue making voluntary national presentations in the framework of the sessions of the Commission;

Requests the Secretariat to process and compile, on a sectoral basis, the information provided by Governments and requests the Task Managers of the sectoral areas to make more comprehensive use of this information in the preparations of the reports to the Commission at its future sessions, in accordance with the issues contained in the multi-year programme of work of the commission, 1998-2002 (see Assembly resolution S-19/2, appendix);

Decides further that a similar sectoral review will be made on "freshwater" for the comprehensive review to be carried out by the General Assembly in the year 2002;

Further requests the Task Managers of the sectoral areas to provide relevant information on the global progress made in the implementation of Agenda 21 as part of the preparations for the comprehensive review to be carried out in the year 2002 by the General Assembly;

Takes note of the proposal under consideration within the Economic Commission for Europe to undertake the exchange of national experiences of the countries within their regions and invites the Commission to share the results of any such exercise with the Commission on Sustainable Development;

Takes note of the important ongoing work aimed at streamlining requests for national information and reporting, of the results of the "pilot phase" relating to indicators of sustainable development, and of the importance of identifying data gaps based on the information already provided by Governments.